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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 002444

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S CARSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/03/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - THREE MINISTERS KILLED IN MOGADISHU  
SUICIDE BOMBING

Classified By: Political Counselor Bob Patterson, reasons 1.4 (b, d).

11. (C) Summary: At approximately 11:30 a.m. on December 3, an apparent suicide bombing at a graduation ceremony at the Shamo hotel in Mogadishu killed at three TFG Ministers, one of them an Amcit, and over a dozen faculty, students, and journalists who were present. As of 2:30 p.m. (local) no group had claimed responsibility for the bombing but most observers assumed that al-Shabaab was responsible. Given the seriousness of the attack, we request the Department issue a statement and read the statement at the top of the noon briefing. We also feel that, if possible, a call from the Secretary to President Sharif would be appropriate. The Ambassador is calling TFG President Sharif to express our condolences. In addition, are releasing a joint statement with the EU, IGAD, League of Arab States, Norway, the UN, and the EU condemning the attack in the strongest terms. We have worked with the UN to arrange medevac for an estimated fifteen wounded students and other ceremony attendees and have found a hospital near Nairobi that has agreed to accept the patients on a pro bono basis. End Summary.

12. (C) Among the dead were the Minister of Higher Education Professor Ibrahim Hassan Adow, the Minister of Education Ahmed Abdillahi Wayel, and the Minister of Health Ms. Qamar Adan Ali. Ibrahim Adow was a U.S. citizen. The three Ministers killed were from the ARS side of the TFG and were considered potential bridge builders between insurgents and the TFG, according to many Somalis. TFG Minister of Sports and Youth Suleiman Oladad Roble is reported to be in a coma following the attack. Among the additional dead were students, journalists, and probably the Dean of Benadir University. Over a dozen ceremony attendees were wounded.

13. (C) Our contacts tell us the suicide bomber, reported by some to have been a man dressed in women's clothing, was among those attending a graduation ceremony of Benadir University medical students at Shumo hotel near kilometer 5 in Mogadishu. The students had been selected to receive scholarships for additional medical training in Sudan.

14. (C) Unconfirmed and inevitable rumors surround the event. For example, Sa'ad clan forces loyal to former Police Commissioner Qeybdiid removed from his post two days ago, are rumored to have vacated posts outside of the hotel. (Note: Kilometer 5 is a Sa'ad clan stronghold. End note.) Qeybdiid told U.N. SRSG Ould Abdullah, during a December 3 conversation, that he had nothing to do with the attack and regretted the fact that his supporters were publicly demonstrating against his removal at the time of the bombing. We consider it unlikely, as well, that Qeybdiid, whatever

his grievances against the TFG following his split with the government, would have engineered such an attack.

15. (C) Comment: Given the seriousness of the attack, we request the Department issue a statement condemning the attack and read the statement at the top of the noon briefing. We also feel that, if possible, a call from the Secretary to President Sharif would be appropriate. The Ambassador is calling TFG President Sharif to express our condolences. In addition, we are releasing a joint statement with other members of the international community condemning the attack in the strongest terms. We have arranged for the UN to medevac approximately fifteen of the most seriously wounded on December 4, and we have found a hospital near Nairobi that has agreed to accept the patients on a pro bono basis.

RANNEBERGER